

1-28-1991

The BG News January 28, 1991

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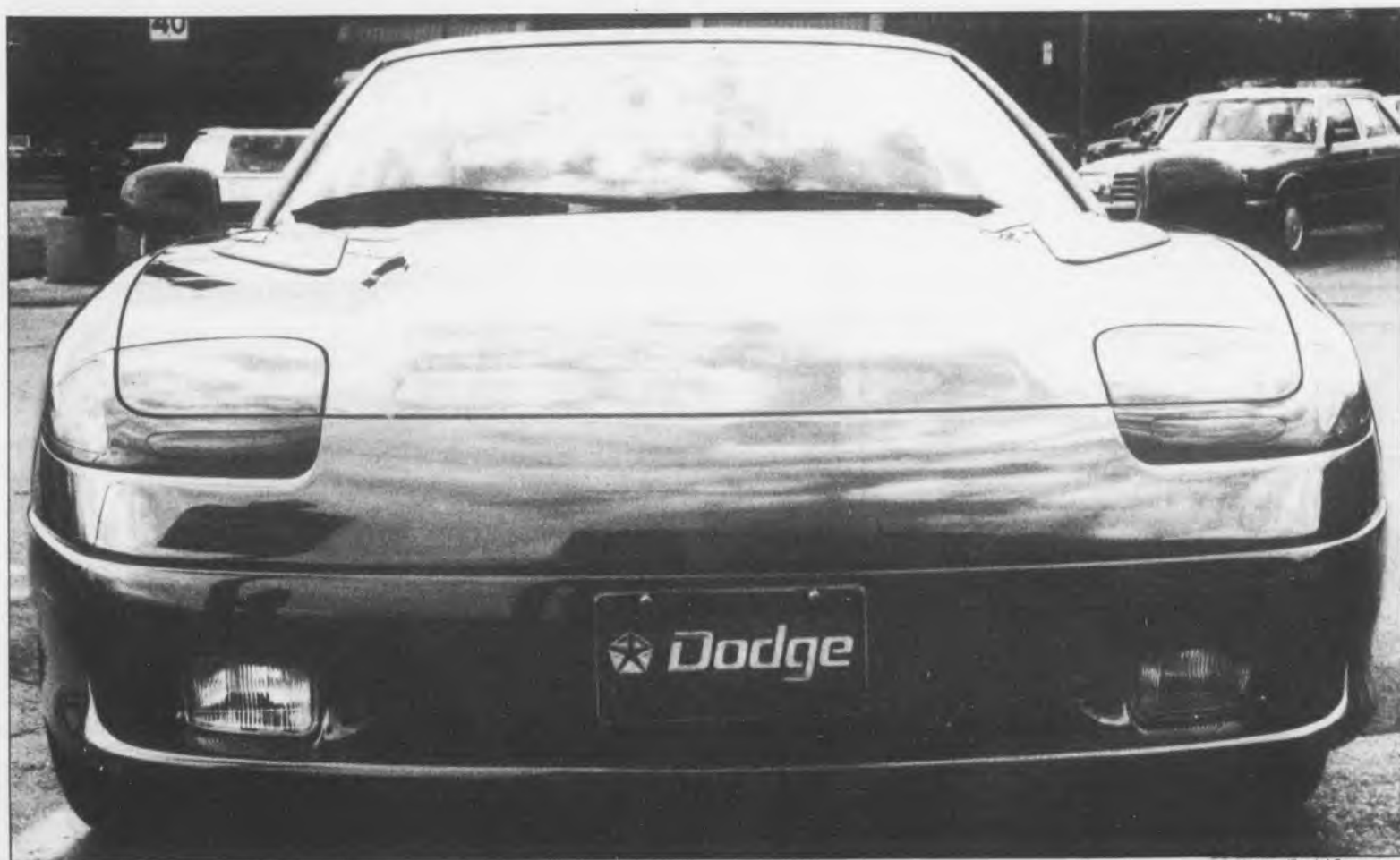
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DETROIT FIGHTS FOR COMPETITIVENESS



BG News/Todd Swanson

Sleek, Sporty, Efficient

Special Edition
of

The BG News

January 28, 1991

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Editor.....Jennifer Taday
 Assistant Editor.....Jeremy S. Weber
 Contributing Writers.....Robert Davidson,
 Debbie Hipple, Jacqueline
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 Greg Watson, Lori Miller,
 Tom Kelsey
 Photographer.....Todd Swanson
 Production.....Lynn Stablein

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Bob Bortel, Jan Stubbs, Nancy Nelson, Jim
 Tinker, Shelley Banks and John Kohlstrand.

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Dodge's new sports car, the Stealth, appears to be the American car makers' answer to the popular Mazda Miata. The Stealth comes with a choice of three engine sizes including a 30-horsepower V-6.



BG News/Todd Swanson

The **Spring Break/Travel Guide**

Next
BG News
 Special Edition

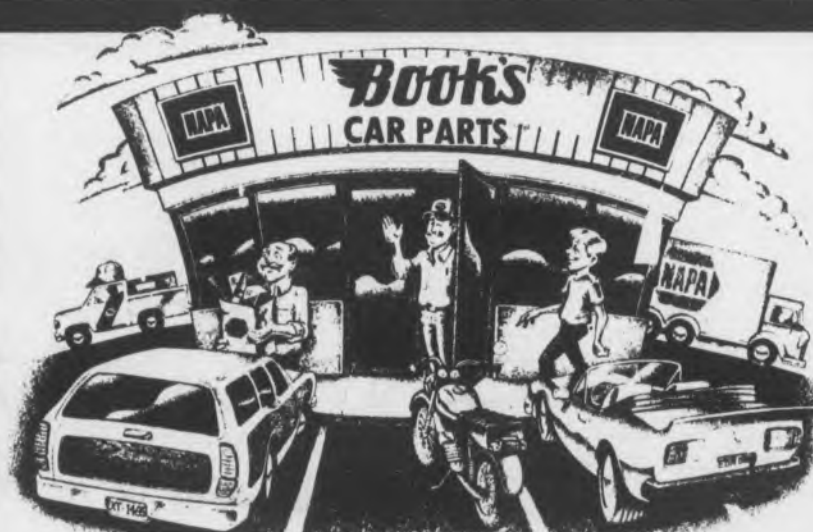
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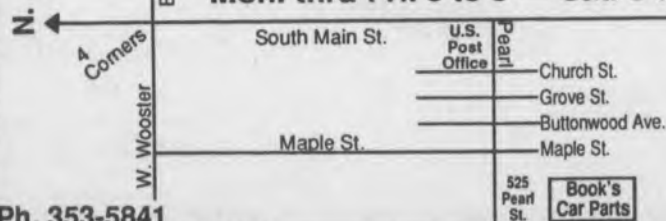


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Airbag installation has positive results

by Robert Davidson

Chrysler Motors is driving into 1991 with a full line of airbag equipped cars.

In 1989 Chrysler fitted the Lebaron coupe with a driver side airbag and for the 1990 model year, equipped all its cars with the "supplemental passive restraint system".

Tom Bidell, general manager of Grogan Chrysler Plymouth Inc. in Toledo, said all models considered cars are now manufactured with airbags and by February 1, 1991, all mini-vans manufactured will be equipped with airbags.

The airbag serves to protect the driver in front-end collisions only and is activated by sensors in the front of the car triggered by that type of impact only, Bidell said.

Jim Valiton, general manager of Valiton Chrysler Plymouth

"Before [the driver] realizes the bag is out, it is already inflated. I have had many customers say the airbag saved their life and that makes it important to me."

—Jim Valiton, general manager of Valiton Chrysler Plymouth Inc.

Inc. in Toledo, said the airbag system is initiated by a frontal impact in excess of 15 mph and the airbag is immediately inflated by an explosive cartridge of nitrogen gas.

"Before [the driver] realizes

the bag is out, it is already inflated," Valiton said.

The airbag is about twice the diameter of the steering wheel and partially deflates seconds after impact to ease exit of the vehicle, he said.

Airbags cannot be reused and must be replaced after a deployment to render the system functional again, Valiton said.

The addition of airbags as standard equipment has improved sales slightly, but not many people pay attention to safety when buying cars, he said.

"I have had many customers say the airbag saved their life and that makes it important to me," he said.

According to Valiton, it is possible future Chrysler cars will also be equipped with passenger side airbags.

An additional advantage of the airbag is reduced insurance rates by many major companies, he said.



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Quick tips can help raise gas mileage

by Lori Miller

Car owners who want better gas mileage, to keep pollutants at a minimum and maintain a reliable means of transportation can take advantage of quick and helpful tips.

Donna Wagner, the program manager of Car Care Council said, the Port Clinton-based office sends editorials to area newspapers and radios informing readers and listeners how to receive good vehicle maintenance.

For example, if someone wants higher gas mileage, he or she should insure their tires are properly inflated and have routine tune-ups performed on their car, Wagner said.

To keep pollutants down, car owners should regularly check their vehicles' emissions level because a task such as replacing the muffler could reduce levels, she added.

The council also recommends keeping a car's interior in good condition, such as fixing carpet holes, which will result in a higher selling or trading price, she said.

The original purpose of the council when introduced by Champion Spark Plugs was to serve as a car care supplement.

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Saturn image help sales soar

by Greg Watson

In the commercials, the Saturn automobile company bills itself as "a new kind of car." Since the first models were released last October, the employees have been working to live up to the image.

"[The public reaction] has been real good so far," said Kirk Aldrich, service director in the Saturn Toledo factory. "At the last Toledo Car Show, [the Saturn cars] were the most popular of the show."

Aldrich said there was a shortage of cars for a while because not enough were made for the demand.

"[The biggest problem we have] is there are not enough cars in right now," said Rick Foley, sales manager at the Saturn Warren dealer in Michigan. "We do have more cars coming in soon."

So far, Aldrich said the only major obstacle the company has to overcome is some people's leanness of buying the automobiles because Saturn is a new company.

Additional people are expected to buy the Saturn models when the public is more aware of the company, he added.

Foley said customers are impressed with the "three year or 36,000 mile" guarantee, the free road-side assistance program and the high mileage per gallon.

Other attractions for potential customers include the prices, ranging from \$10,500 to \$11,000, he added.

Aldrich added the Saturn has composite rust panels, made of a strong plastic-like material, which prevent damage in parking lots and prevent rust.

The first models were released Oct. 26, 1990, but the original idea of the Saturn company came from former General Motors president Roger Smith in 1982, Aldrich said.

The Warren dealership opened three weeks after the first models were released and Foley said they have sold more than 200 models since.

Additional models also in development include convertibles, sports cars and vans, Aldrich said.

Clean record can help lower costs

by Jacqueline M. Porter

Lowering car insurance rates can be accomplished in many ways, according to a local insurance agency president.

Jeff Smith, president of Huber, Harger, Welt, and Smith Insurance Agency Inc., 209 W. Poe Rd., said the easiest way to lower insurance rates is to use deductibles in comprehensive and collision insurance.

"The higher the deductible you use, the lower your premium will be," he said.

People's driving records, including accidents and traffic violations, will also affect the price of the premium, Smith said.

"You have to maintain a clean driving record," he said. "A DUI, fleeing the scene of an accident or fleeing an officer is a major violation and the kiss of death as far as insurance and premiums go," he said.

Students can be eligible for discounts in their rates with certain insurance companies, he said.

"Many students on campus

don't have vehicles with them at school and they are on their parents' [insurance] plan," he said. "If they go to school more than 100 miles away from home they can receive a discount on their insurance."

However, if the student has a car with them on campus, this discount does not apply, he added.

Some insurance agencies credit students that maintain a grade point average of a 3.0 or greater because statistics reveal that these students have fewer accidents, Smith said.

"That's not saying that these students spend more time in the library than in a car — it's just what the facts show," he said.

Safeguarding a car can also result in credits toward their rate, he said.

"If you put an alarm on your car or a steering wheel lock on your car, some companies will give you a credit on your account — however, this credit does not pay for itself," he said. "It will, however give the car owner a peace of mind."



BG News/Todd Swanson

The Northwest Ohio Street Machiners (NWOSM) held their annual winter car show at the Lucas County Recreation Center in Maumee last weekend. The show attracted car enthusiasts from all over the Northwestern Ohio area. Not only were cars displayed, but part trading also occurred.

Financing explained

by Thomas W. Kelsey

For many college students, financing a new or used car can be a challenging experience, especially if they are not familiar with all the variables involved.

Interest rates, the length of the loan, rebates and the consideration of a warranty are crucial factors when applying for a car loan, according to Student Legal Services managing attorney Greg Bakies.

"When financing a new or used car, you shouldn't let the type of loan entice you into buying a particular model," Bakies advised. "You should instead consider some of the standard rebates on most new cars, and then weigh the difference."

Bakies also warned consumers to look past the initial monthly payments and to investigate the length of the loan and the overall interest rates. He explained by giving an example of two similar cars, such as a Ford Thunderbird and Pontiac Bonneville.

"Let's say for example the T-bird has a principal cost of \$10,500 and the Bonneville costs \$10,000," he said. "The Ford's monthly payments are \$300 per month and payments on the Pontiac are \$400 per month. Although the Ford's monthly payments are cheaper, the interest rate may be 12 percent while the Bonneville is only 10 percent."

"The consumer must look past the monthly installments or he or she may actually be paying a lot more."

Bakies also advised buyers to consider the length of the loan compared to the length of the

manufacturer's warranty on the vehicle.

"Because most new cars come with warranties, the buyer should weigh the expiration of the warranty with the loan because the loan may be several years longer," he said.

If the loan exceeds the warranty, Bakies said the buyer must consider the additional costs for maintenance and any major repairs should the car break down.

loan. She instead requests students meet specific criteria.

"You must have some kind of income for at least six months and have a copy of one of your more recent paystubs," she said. "We would also need to run a credit check and to know of any about any past debts you may have had."

If their application is accepted, the bank will generally loan a student 85 percent of the retail

"The consumer must look past the monthly installments or he or she may actually be paying a lot more."

—Greg Bakies, Student Legal Services managing attorney

Of course, many college students will face a "Catch 22" situation when trying to secure a loan for a car without any credit, but according to a personal banker at the Huntington Banking Company, there is a solution to this problem.

Martha Woelke advised college students to obtain a department store credit card, a VISA or Mastercard and to keep up with the monthly payments.

"We don't have any special programs for college students or graduating seniors, so it's a necessity to have good credit when applying for a loan with our corporation," she said.

Gail Asmus, a financial service administrator at State Home Savings, 300 S. Main St., also said her company does not have any special considerations for college students seeking a first-time

price of a new car, and then assign an affixed interest rate based on regional standards.

Asmus said the interest rates are higher on older cars despite their cheaper retail price, especially those manufactured before 1984-85.

"It's a security measure on the banks part," she said. "If the car is an older model, the rate is higher because if the individual cannot make payments and the car is repossessed, the cars resale value may be considerably lower over the time the individual owned the car."

Asmus advised buyers to shop around for the most realistic loan and to check current national price listings for the model he or she wishes to purchase.

"Because of the importance in buying a car, it's important you know exactly what you're getting yourself into," she said.



Take Care of Those Maintenance Problems Early!

Gulf War to have little impact on fuel prices

by Lori Miller

The Gulf crisis has sparked long lines at gas stations in the past, but since fighting began no unusual rush for gas has occurred.

According to local gas stations workers, it appeared most people were too busy at home watching news of the war last week to worry about beating high prices and filling their gas tanks.

The number of people waiting to fill their tanks Wednesday night was about average, said Jeff Saylor, station attendant at Barney's Convenience Mart, 996 S. Main St.

Presently, the gas price at Barney's is \$1.19 for unleaded, Saylor said — down from the pre-attack high of \$1.28.

The highest price for regular unleaded gas since the invasion of Kuwait has been \$1.27 at Clark Super 100, 333 S. Main St., said station attendant Keith Beeler.

However, on Wednesday the prices dropped to \$1.18, Beeler said.

Bowling Green prices are about five to 10 cents higher than Toledo prices and customers are sure to inform gas station workers at Speedway Petroleum, 1650 E. Wooster St., about the difference, said attendant Don Wilcox.

"[Although] people complain no matter what

the price is," he said.

Gas prices at Speedway went up Wednesday afternoon to \$1.23 because of the threat of war and the expiration of the United Nations deadline.

However on Wednesday evening the prices decreased five cents to \$1.18 when President Bush declared the opening of the federal oil reserves, Wilcox said.

A possible explanation of prices decreasing from the higher prices since the initial invasion could be the diminishing feeling of uncertainty, said Peter Hutchinson, associate vice president of academic affairs.

Crude oil prices have lowered since the beginning of the war and since crude oil is the primary unit made in gasoline — the price of gas is obviously going to drop, Hutchinson said.

When Iraq first invaded Kuwait, people were not sure what type of damage — if any — would be done to the oil fields in Saudi Arabia, he said. However, now the largest amount of uncertainty is gone and prices have steadily declined, he said.

"Uncertainty [does] affect the market," he said.

Gas prices should remain the same if there is no "significant damage to oil production facilities," he said.

However, if Israel becomes involved in the war, prices will probably increase due to fear of substantial damage and a long war, he said.

Gas quality disputed

by Deborah Hipple

Some experts say the higher the octane in the gasoline you use for a car, the cleaner the vehicle remains. However, this is an argument many mechanics and engineers continue to disagree about.

A fuel injection system, according to Webster's New World Dictionary, is a "system for forcing fuel into combustion chambers of an internal-combustion engine." Octane is the number that represents anti-knock properties of the gasoline poured into that system.

According to Bob Bath, assistant manager of Donald's Sohio

Service, 1005 N. Main, the octane in gas prevents the fuel injector from clogging up.

He added there are three main "brands" of octane most available for your car — 87, 89 and 92.

Mechanic Jerry Cotterman of Mason's Gulf, 435 E. Wooster, said generally any octane 87 "on up" is good for your car, but he said 89 is the best.

Cotterman explained that the higher the octane number, the more additives are included in the gasoline and these additives keep the fuel injector clean and free of "build-up."

"It's a gummy type of build-up ... after a couple of years it can gradually affect your car," Cotterman said.

Advanced marketing engineer Sterling McFee, of Keneco Distributors-Marathon Petroleum Products in Findlay, disagreed.

He said high octane numbers do not affect the cleanliness of your fuel injection system.

"The additives (in the octane gasolines) treat grades the same — you don't have to buy high price premiums," McFee said. "Your car is happy on 87 ... we love to sell premium because it is more profitable."

McFee added a higher grade octane will not benefit the car unless it is made for the octane.

After 40 years of testing, McFee said, "the best indications perceived are that there is little benefit running on a higher octane."

Sharing rides lead to cheap travel means

by Morella Raleigh

University ride boards offer students an economical and convenient travel alternative.

"It's a way for them [students] to get an inexpensive ride home and maybe to meet some people," said University Activities Organization Director Gale Swanka.

The more than 10-year-old UUAO sponsored ride board in the University Union uses a self-matching process, according to Swanka.

She said the board has maps of the United States and of Ohio which are broken into areas which correspond to a rack. Students fill out index cards to place in the rack with their phone numbers and whether they need or are offering a ride, Swanka said.

Sue Perkins, a sophomore dietetics major used the ride board to get a ride to visit a friend in Cleveland. She said, "I met some nice people and it's a lot less expensive than taking the bus."

Some residence halls, such as Founders Quadrangle, also have ride boards.

Swanka said students riding together usually split the cost of gas and tolls.

"A lot of times drivers want

company, especially over long distances. The money is nice but a lot of times it's not the most important thing," she said.

Gary Rensi, a senior statistics major, gets rides to see his girlfriend in Akron.

"I usually make sure their tank is filled up when we return to Bowling Green," he said. "They're doing me a favor so I figure I can do them a favor."

The Off-Campus Student Center has a message board which serves as a ride board, said student assistant Jenny Norris.

Norris, a senior speech and hearing therapy major, said off-campus students use the board to find carpools to campus.

"It's a place where an off-campus student can go to find rides for a particular day," she said. "It's really helpful and I've never received any complaints."

The only complaint about the UAO ride board is from students who can not find rides to their specific destinations on a particular weekend, Swanka said.

Swanka said, "The biggest tip is to plan in advance. If they [students] wait until the last minute, they might have to take a bus."

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Auto tire rating scores increase

by Lawrence L. Knutson
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Auto tires are getting better, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said Tuesday in releasing a list of the 18 best-rated tires.

All 1,800 tire lines were self-graded by manufacturers under the safety agency's Uniform Tire Quality Grading System.

Jerry Ralph Curry, the traffic safety agency's administrator, said that as recently as 1985 only two tires were rated "A" for traction and for temperature or

received scores of above 200 for treadwear.

More than 100 tire lines now meet these ratings, he said.

"It is evident that market forces have encouraged tire manufacturers to produce tires that give improved performance," he said.

All 18 tires on the newest ratings list received "A" ratings in both categories. Their treadwear ratings ranged from 280 to 340.

The safety agency said traction grades evaluate a tire's relative ability to stop on wet pavement under controlled conditions. Thus a tire rated "A" should provide better traction than one rated

"B" or "C."

Temperature grades, also rated "A," "B" or "C," describe resistance to heat buildup within the tire. Heat shortens a tire's life and impairs its ability to withstand breakdown and possible blowout, the agency said.

Curry said that the treadwear grade is a comparative rating based on the wear rate of the tire during testing under controlled conditions on a government test course. A tire with a 200 grade would be expected to wear twice as long on the government test course as one rated 100.

But Curry said that rating may not translate into miles in the world of day-to-day driving be-

cause of a host of variable conditions, including road surface, weather, inflation pressure, and wheel alignment.

Curry said the tire grades are intended to help buyers make shopping comparisons when combined with such other factors as price, brand and dealer recommendations. All tires sold in the United States must meet minimum federal standards, independent of the ratings.

The 18 tire lines receiving the highest ratings are:

Goodrich Comp H4 except 13 and 15 diameter; Goodrich Comp V4; Riken Classic STX-70, 14 and

15 diameter; Riken STX-70, Classic STX-70, 13 diameter; Goodrich Comp H4, 13 and 15 diameter; Goodrich 95H, 107H;

Goodrich Euro T-A, 14 and 15 diameter; General XP2000 AS (P215-70R14); Goodyear Eagle GA H-V (P195-60R15); Sumitomo HTR-70, 14 and 15 diameter; Uniroyal Rallye GTH; Hoosier A-S;

Medalist Defender, 13 diameter; Medalist SX9000 H, 14 and 15 diameter; National Renegade Plus 4, 14 and 15 diameter; Sumitomo HTR-70 (13 diameter) and -60H (15 diameter); and, Goodyear Invicta GA, GL H-V.

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BG News/Todd Swanson

Customized automobiles, such as this one titled "Hotrod" were on display at the recent Northwest Ohio Street Machiners' custom car show, where more than 50 autos were on display.

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Cold can pose car puzzles

by Morrella Raleigh

Car owners who take the time to winterize their vehicle now could save themselves undesirable seasonal car trouble incidents later.

Local technician Bill Sockman said car owners should have their cars checked before a breakdown occurs.

"The only time people get concerned is when something happens and then they think 'I should have had it checked' but then it's generally too late," said Sockman, partner and technician at Sockman Automotive, 432 Ridge St.

The engine is the most important consideration when winterizing a car, he said.

"If you don't have enough anti-freeze, the engine is subject to freezing up and the engine can crack," he said.

Sockman also offered these tips:

■ Have a routine engine tune-up.

■ Check all belts and hoses.

■ Check the battery.

■ Make sure wiper blades are in good condition.

Tires are another important consideration during the winter because cold weather reduces tire pressure, said service manager John Lashaway of Randy Coe's Service Center, 1011 S. Main St.

"You should check tire pressure and make sure the treads are in decent shape," Lashaway said.

Scott Cline, a technician at AAA Stadium View Sunoco, 1530 E. Wooster St., said, "Salt and

◻ See Winterizing, page 7.

Camaro places at top of most stolen car list

DETROIT (AP) — For the fourth year running, the 1986 Chevrolet Camaro beat out all rivals as the most-stolen car in the United States, an insurance valuation company said.

In an annual listing, CCC Information Services Inc. of Chicago said the 1986 Hyundai Excel GL jumped from 10th place in 1989 to fourth in 1990, making it the most-stolen imported car last year.

Cars are stolen mostly for parts, not joy rides, said William Geen, the company's vice president for valuation services.

"That clearly is the stance the insurance industry has taken," he said. "Where the car itself isn't terribly exciting or high in resale value, then it would tend to mean that there is a demand for the parts."

As in past years, General Motors Corp. cars, including the

Camaro, dominated the top 10, holding down all spots except the Hyundai's. In fact, out of the first 20 on CCC's list, 16 cars were made at GM plants.

The most-stolen Ford Motor Co. product last year was the 1988 Mustang GT in 42nd place. A Chrysler Corp. vehicle doesn't show up on the list until number 97, the 1988 Jeep Cherokee 4X4.

The company provided about

1.2 million vehicle valuations for the auto insurance industry last year and 14.7 percent of those were for stolen cars.

New York was the state with the highest percentage of stolen cars last year with about 5,400, or 3 percent, of all the stolen cars reported to CCC. California, Texas, New Jersey and Illinois followed the state in relation to stolen vehicles.

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Winterizing

□ Continued from page 6.

sloppy weather will definitely rust the body of cars. It is important to keep it waxed and clean."

However, a special type of rustproofing is available to protect cars from the bad weather, according to Dennie Rush of Ziebart Rustproofing.

"We coat the whole car including doors, fenders and underneath it with a tarry type substance. It protects against salt, it serves as a sound bearer to reduce road noise and it keeps water from getting into the car through cracks and crevices," he said.

Once a car has been rust-proofed, it should be inspected once a year in case it needs a touch up, he said.

Drivers should have both the outside and inside of their car prepared for the cold weather when driving, especially on long trips.

According to a recent *USA Weekend* report, all cars should have:

- An ice scraper and snow brush.
- Jumper cables and a spare tire.

- Blankets.
- A flashlight and flares.
- A basic first-aid kit.

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